

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The California Highway Patrol (CHP), in an effort to determine whether its enforcement contacts with the public were reflective of the statewide California population, with regard to race/ethnicity, began gathering gender, race/ethnic, and age data from all enforcement contacts in July 1999. This proactive effort was expanded in October 1999 to include the collection of demographic data from non-enforcement contacts as well as recording the outcome of all contacts, i.e., citation, verbal warning, Notice to Correct, arrest, or motorist service. Also, at that time, a vehicle search category was added wherein it was indicated whether or not a vehicle search was conducted. Finally, the data collection process was expanded again in March 2000 to include documenting the demographic data of drivers involved in traffic collisions.

A data analysis plan was developed to use simple summary statistics for the aggregate statewide data. The Department believed that the demographic data from non-enforcement contacts and collisions would be more representative of the individuals who utilize the highways that CHP patrols than resident population figures. Therefore, statistical comparisons include enforcement contacts, motorist services, collisions, and population.

This report covers the first ten months of the CHP's demographic data collection effort. During the July 1, 1999, through April 30, 2000, data collection period, data from **2,638,589** contacts were collected. Of these, 2.1 million contacts were for some type of enforcement action, nearly one-half million (470,083) individuals were provided non-enforcement related services, and 31,933 contacts were related to traffic collisions. Vehicle searches resulted from 23,584 of the contacts which occurred during the seven months that searches were documented. Over 80 percent of the searches resulted in arrests or citations.

Hispanics, Asians, and "Other" ethnic groups were underrepresented with regard to the number of enforcement actions, motorist services, and collisions, when compared to their proportion in the resident population. Enforcement contacts for African-Americans were consistent with their proportion of motorist services and collisions, but slightly elevated when compared to population. Whites were overrepresented in enforcement contacts, motorist services, and collisions, compared to population. Males and younger people were contacted for some enforcement action more often than females and older people.

The results show that CHP officers do not employ race/ethnicity as a basis for enforcement stops.